

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4969

INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 3061

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, BR

SUBJECT: ARENA--AND GEISEL--REBUT MDB STATEMENT

REF: BRASILIA 3019

1. ARENA ANSWER TO MDB STATEMENT (REFTEL) WAS ISSUED AS EXPECTED APRIL 8, AND BEGINS BY DECLARING THAT PARTY "REPELS WITH ALL BEHEMENCE THE MDB NOTE." ATTACKING MDB FOR DENYING REALITY OF REVOLUTION AND FAILING TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN ITS LEGITIMATE FIELD OF ACTION AND "CHALLENGING CONFRONTATION" OF THE REVOLUTION, ARENA STATEMENT DECLARES "THE GOVERNMENT DESERVES THE RESPECT OF THE PEOPLE FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY WORK LOOKING TO AVOID A RECESSION AND UNEMPLOYMENT." SCORING MDB STATEMENT AS "FULL OF DEMAGOGUERY AND ARTIFICE LOOKING TOWARD THE AGITATION OF THE COUNTRY AND THE EXPLOITATION OF THE ELECTORATE," STATEMENT PROMISES ARENA "WILL NOT PERMIT VERBAL AGGRESSION AND POLITICAL OPPORTUNISM TO PREJUDICE THE GOVERNMENT'S MISSION," AND ADDS ASSURANCE THAT GOVERNMENT, "ESTEEMED AND RESPECTED," WILL CONTINUE TO ENJOY SUPPORT OF ARENA AND OF THE PEOPLE. STATEMENT ALSO DECLARES "WE ARE TODAY AN EMERGING POWER, RECOGNIZED NOT BY THE VULGAR PROPAGANDA OF OUTMODED OFFICIALISM BUT BY THE MOST POWERFUL NATIONS OF THE WORLD."

2. THE GENERAL SURPRISE PRESIDENT GEISEL TOOK OCCASION

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OF SPEECH DURING ROUTINE VISIT TO MATO GROSSO TO MAKE

STATEMENTS WIDELY INTERPRETED BY PRESS AS ALSO REPRESENTING GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO MDB STATEMENT. DENYING THAT PEOPLE ARE "SAD" OR "OPPRESSED", GEISEL DECLARED "I BELIEVE THAT THE PEOPLE ARE MUCH MORE ON MY SIDE AND ON THE SIDE OF THE GOVERNMENT AND ON THE SIDE OF THE REVOLUTION," ADDING "WE HAVE A FREE REGIME. ALL CITIZENS ARE FREE AND ALL LIVE WITH OR THROUGH LIBERTY. THERE IS NOT LIBERTY ONLY FOR IRRESPONSIBLE PEOPLE." ASSERTING AMPLE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, GEISEL RECOGNIZED PROBLEM OF INFLATION BUT ADDED "THAT IS NOT A PROBLEM ONLY FOR US NOR IS IT A PROBLEM NEGLECTED BY US." RETURNING TO THEME HE HAS SOUNDED BEFORE, GEISEL SAID "THOSE WHO SPEAK OF VIOLENCE, WHO SPEAK OF ARBITRARINESS, WHO SPEAK OF MISTREATMENT, IN SUM, THOSE WHO LIVE DENIGRATING WHAT THE REVOLUTION IS DOING, HAVE TO COME OUT OF THE CUBICLE IN WHICH THEY ARE LIVING AND OPEN THE WINDOWS. THEY HAVE TO LOOK OUTWARD AND SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE WORLD AND CONCLUDE, THEN, THAT BRAZIL, PERHAPS WITHIN ITS DIFFICULTIES IS ONE OF THE HAPPIEST NATIONS OF THE UNIVERSE."

3. COMMENT: EXPECTED ARENA STATEMENT AND UNEXPECTED PRESIDENTIAL REBUTTAL OF MDB CHARGES HAVE STRENGTHENED SIGNIFICANTLY THE PREVAILING IDEA THAT RECENT CRISIS, CALLED BY SOME OBSERVERS THE WORST OF THIS ADMINISTRATION, IS NOW CLOSING OUT. IN OBVIOUS EFFORT TO FAVOR THAT OUTCOME, MDB SPOKESMEN WERE NOTABLY RETICENT IN APRIL 8 CONGRESSIONAL SESSION. WHILE SOME SPECULATION CONTINUES ABOUT STATE OF FEELING WITHIN THE REVOLUTION AND THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, NEXT WEEK'S CONGRESSIONAL RECESS IS EXPECTED (AS NOTED REFTTEL) TO HELP CLOSE OFF THE CRISIS. END COMMENT.
CRIMMINS

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